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Illinois in 1818. By SOLON JUSTUS BUCK. [Illinois Centennial Publications, published by authority of the Illinois Centennial Commission, introductory volume.] (Chicago: McClurg. 1918. Pp. xxvi, 362. \$2.00.)

ONE of the duties imposed upon the Illinois Centennial Commission which was created by legislative action in January, 1916, was that of compiling and publishing a commemorative history of the state. As first conceived the Centennial History was to be issued in five volumes, covering the history of Illinois from the coming of the first Europeans to the present time. Later it was thought advisable to add to the work already planned a preliminary volume giving a view of the state at the time of its admission. The preliminary volume—*Illinois in 1818*—by Dr. S. J. Buck has recently come from the press. The editorial note which appears in this volume sets forth the scope and character of the work. Naturally the chief aim of the editors is to produce an accurate history written in a scientific spirit, supplemented by such foot-notes and bibliographical matter as will be of service to students, but at the same time assurances are given that an earnest attempt will be made to give the volumes "sufficient human interest and literary quality to interest the intelligent general reader".

No satisfactory history of Illinois exists at present. That the commission should have undertaken the task of supplying this want is therefore exceedingly gratifying, not only to those persons interested in the development of the state purely as a matter of local pride, but to the more serious students of American history as well—particularly to those who devote themselves primarily to the study of the West. Illinois, on account of its geographical position, may well be called the keystone state of the Mississippi Valley, and as such offers a wonderful opportunity for the study of the problems of state-building in the West. The Ohio River, its southern boundary, was for years the main highway of the hunter-pioneers who first occupied the wooded districts of southern Illinois and established there the political and social ideals of Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Carolinas. The head of Lake Michigan, the western terminus of the great waterway connecting New England with the West, touches the northeastern corner of the state. Through this gateway thousands of home-seekers came from the East to settle upon the prairies, and to work out the first experiments of the American pioneers in the occupation of the vast, fertile, treeless stretches, which, in the course of time, were to become the agricultural storehouse of the nation. Here the New Englanders and New Yorkers developed a social, political, and economic organization which differed radically from that which flourished in the woodlands of the southern part of the state. In short, the northern and southern streams of population, bearing with them opposing political and social ideals, flowed westward to meet, then to struggle for supremacy, and finally to fuse in Illinois. The story of this

development forms by no means the least important part of the history of the state.

To grasp the significance of the progress made in a hundred years of statehood a survey of conditions as they existed a century ago is essential. Thus the task which the author sets for himself is "to portray the social, economic, and political life of Illinois at the close of the territorial period, and, in addition, to tell the story of the transition from colonial dependence to the full dignity of a state in the union". The first chapters deal with the Indians and the fur-trade, the public lands, and the extent of settlement within the state in 1818. Each chapter forms a carefully organized summary of practically all the available information on the subject under consideration. Three chapters deal with the pioneers, their economic situation, and social condition. These will appeal to the student of American pioneer life, for he will find in them that which is of much more than mere local importance, an interesting and accurate portrayal of conditions as they were in every frontier community of the hard-wood districts of the West.

The last half of the book is devoted to a discussion of territorial politics, the birth and development of the movement which finally resulted in the admission of Illinois, the constitutional convention and its work, and finally the establishment of the state government, the first elections, and the organization of the first state legislative body. Had the author done no more than this his contribution would have been a solid one, for the contemporaneous accounts usually reflect the bitter prejudices which the struggle over the extension of slavery injected into the politics of the territory.

The bibliography, although not a long one, includes practically every item of sufficient importance to be of service to the student of the period. Foot-notes do not overburden the pages but there are enough to guide any investigator. The index is good and numerous illustrations together with some really useful maps add to the value of the volume. So far, at least, the promise of the editors has been fulfilled.

WILLIAM V. POOLEY.

Writings of John Quincy Adams. Edited by WORTHINGTON C. FORD. Volume VII., 1820-1823. (New York: Macmillan Company. 1917. Pp. xxi, 516. \$3.50.)

INTEREST in Adams's *Writings* increases as we enter the twenties, a critical period in his public career. The value of this collection, it may be said again, consists less in its bringing to light documents of new and startling import than in supplying gaps in the already voluminous record of John Quincy Adams as a public servant. Even his *Memoirs*—the most complete personal record of any American statesman—sometimes contain Adams's reflections and cogitations rather than the precise outcome of his mental processes. In the volume before us, for example,